



Capitol Report

News & Updates from Your State Capitol
By Arkansas Secretary of State Charlie Daniels

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Arkansas and the Help America Vote Act

The problems that occurred during the 2000 Presidential election demanded a change in federal and state election practices/laws. In response The United States Congress passed the "Help America Vote Act" (HAVA) in 2002. HAVA mandates changes in almost every part of the voting process, from voter registration to type of equipment used.

Arkansas recently passed laws to meet the requirements of HAVA (Acts 994 and 995). These laws reflect changes mandated by HAVA like provisional balloting, voter registration, and voter education. In order to effect these changes the State of Arkansas will receive approximately \$27 million from the federal government for improvements to our election systems. The majority of these monies will be in the form of grants that the state can apply for based on a plan that is certified and submitted by the Secretary of State's office in cooperation with the State Executive branch and local government entities.

The first installment of the federal monies will assist in replacing antiquated voting equipment, educating and informing citizens about changes in the voting process, and conducting research and development on implementation of HAVA. Arkansas is expected to receive federal grants and payments to



approach \$27 million over a three-year period to help the state implement various election improvements mandated by HAVA.

Secretary Daniels appointed a planning committee to provide review and comment on the state plan. The committee consists of public members, local election officials, disability groups, election coordinators, and minority groups. This committee first met April 24 and will meet every other week until the state plan is completed.

With cooperation from county clerks and election commissioners, the Secretary of State's office submitted an application for the machine replacement buy out program offered under HAVA. The program offers an "early out" replacement option for counties using punch cards or lever machines. Arkansas currently has 13 counties that employ this type of equipment for voting, which must be replaced by January 1, 2006, to comply with voting system standards mandated by HAVA.



Welcome to the inaugural edition of The Capitol Report! As Secretary of State, I believe one of my most important duties is to keep you informed about activities here at the State Capitol. The Capitol Report will be published quarterly and will highlight projects and policy issues that are important to you.

On January 14th, I began my first day in office as your new Secretary of State. The 84th General Assembly had convened for the 2003 session, several construction projects were underway, and we were facing implementation of the largest federally mandated election reform law in history. To put it mildly, my staff and I were short on neither work nor challenge. However, challenge represents opportunity and I am excited about the opportunity to make a difference in the Secretary of State's office.

This edition of the Capitol Report highlights some of the progress we've made so far and presents some notable goals for the future, including a beautification plan for the Capitol grounds. Also included is an

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HAVA(Cont. from pg. 2)

"Federal funding gives Arkansas the opportunity to replace voting equipment with little cost to the counties. Even more exciting is the possibility of moving to a uniform voting system statewide," Daniels noted.

The decision to move to a uniform system will be contingent on full funding of HAVA, and the 13 counties qualifying for the early out program could serve as the first to install systems in a phased implementation plan. The General Services Administration, funding authority for early out payments, will designate an amount that Arkansas will receive for these early out payments no later than May 31, 2003.

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interesting story about the return of the Capitol chandelier and an introduction of our new young voter's program.

Probably among the most significant policy issues we are dealing with is the Help America Vote Act (HAVA). States across the country are currently developing strategic plans for implementation of the federal election reform mandates (see article on front page). Fortunately, Congress has provided funding to pay for many of the measures included in HAVA. This funding, a sound implementation plan, and a cooperative effort between the state and counties will, I believe, give Arkansas an unparalleled opportunity to make improvements to our elections process. I hope you enjoy The Capitol Report! Please feel free to send us your comments or questions anytime.

National Young Voter's Month

Arkansas Secretary of State Charlie Daniels, in cooperation with the National Association of Secretaries of State, hosted National Young Voter's Month events during the week of March 24 through March 27, 2003. Secretary Daniels invited high-school students from across Arkansas to attend the voter education event.

Over 75 students and their sponsors attended the four-hour intensive voter education program, which included "The History of American Suffrage," a review of voter registration information, a mock election, and a review of "How a Bill Becomes a Law." The day's events also included a discussion of current issues, a State Capitol tour, visits with state lawmakers and finished with a visit to the House and Senate galleries to watch the legislature in action.

"The History of American Suffrage" presentation included key facts about various Congressional Acts and Amendments to the U.S. Constitution that impacted citizens who were previously disenfranchised. Students who attended the presentation gained knowledge of actual events in history that will allow each of them to be eligible to register and vote after their eighteenth birthday.

Voter registration information included a presentation by a voter services representative of the Secretary of State's office, who offered information concerning what it means to be a qualified elector in Arkansas and explained the process of registering to vote. Voter registration locations, rules on absentee and early voting, and "How to Become a Student Poll Worker" were also discussed.

A mock election, featuring a 1790's style ballot and ballot box, emphasized the importance of "The History of American Suffrage" presentation. Students were randomly assigned a card with a symbol denoting their age, sex, race, ethnic origin, and level of income. Those students who were not landowning white males over 18 were allowed to fill out the ballots, but not allowed to cast them. Many students remarked that not being able to vote in the election was "unfair," which drove home the point that the right to vote is a hard-won, precious freedom in the U.S.

Following the 1790 mock election there was a second mock election in which all students were allowed to vote on an electronic voting machine. The morning concluded with a presentation regarding Arkansas's legislative process and "How a Bill Becomes a Law."

After the voter education activities, Secretary Daniels talked with the students about the importance of being involved in government and the political process. A forum with Secretary of State staff to discuss current events followed. The students were concerned and interested with the school consolidation issue, the war in the Middle East, and voting when they are away at college.

During lunchtime, various state representatives and state senators took time to visit with students from their respective districts.

The day's activities concluded with a tour of the Arkansas State Capitol, including a visit to the House of Representatives and Senate galleries. While in the galleries, senators and representatives recognized the schools from their districts.

With the success of this program, Secretary of State Daniels plans to conduct





YOUR STATE CAPITOL



After 16 years of construction (1899-1915), two architects, six elected governors, and four Capitol Commissions the Arkansas State Capitol was finally complete in 1915. The total cost was \$2,205,779.42. The State Capitol sits at the top of a rise at Capitol Avenue and Woodlane Street in Little Rock, was first occupied in 1911, and has served as the seat of Arkansas state government since. It serves as the office for six of the seven constitutional officers and is the home of the Arkansas State Senate, the Arkansas State House of Representatives and houses over 300 employees. But the Capitol is much more than just a government office building, it is part of Arkansas's living legacy.

The Arkansas State Capitol attracts more than 60,000 visitors each year. Organized group tours are provided Monday through Friday, with the building open on weekends as well. In addition, several hundred times each year wedding photos are taken, and dozens of events and receptions are hosted in the Capitol. The Capitol, inside and outside, is used for rallies and press conferences, receptions and dinners hundreds of times each year. This, the single most identifiable symbol of our state, is also the most heavily used building in the state.

All this use demands an incredible degree of accessibility balanced with public safety, security, and constant attention to upkeep and repair. Even in a building of stone, this constant use has a wearing effect. Foot traffic, deliveries, the touch of thousands of hands, cleaning and repairs, and weather conditions all wear away at the building and other structures on the grounds.

The Arkansas Secretary of State has the duty of maintaining the State Capitol Building and Capitol Grounds; and Secretary Daniels places very high importance on working hard to correct the years of damage to the Capitol. The direction that Secretary Daniels has set for his administration is intended to ensure that the Capitol effectively serve the needs of state government; remains open and accessible to the public; retains, and in some cases regains, the historical integrity of its construction and appearance; and that all examples of deterioration be reversed.

Renovating the Arkansas State Capitol will involve

Among Secretary Daniels immediate goals are these:

- Restore and return to historical integrity the east entry to the Capitol, from the steps at Woodlane Street through the monumental limestone front steps, including the curving promenade between.
- Restore the area of the first floor entry on the east side, known as the tunnel entry. Improve public access at this point and return the area to a historically accurate condition and appearance.
- Clean and repoint (replace the material that seals the joints between limestone blocks) the exterior of the north side of the Capitol to prevent water from seeping in and causing more decay.
- Restore and provide access to the Capitol's oldest war monuments including cleaning and restoration of the War of 1812 Memorial. Age and weathering have resulted in deterioration, especially to the bases of the memorials to the men and women of the Civil War.
- Improve the overall landscaping of the Capitol grounds, applying a design scheme based on historic evidence and, where possible, the use of native species for plantings.

many years of hard work and money. Secretary Daniels plans to apply for grants from the Arkansas Natural and Cultural Resources Council (ANCRC) for help in attaining many of his goals that he has set forth in bringing the Capitol back to its former glory. The first ANCRC grant, under Secretary of State Daniels administration, was approved for improving the east entryway, the monumental steps, and restoring the bases and developing access to historical monuments located on the east lawn. This initial grant is for \$770,000.00. Secretary Daniels is deeply committed to sustaining the living legacy of this building for future generations of Arkansans. Watch for subsequent issues of The Capitol Report for progress updates on Secretary Daniels' strategic plan for the Capitol Building and Grounds.

An Old Friend Comes Home

For almost nine decades, Capitol visitors have peered high above their heads for a view of the Capitol's main chandelier, a striking fixture hanging in the rotunda. Absent for nearly five months for restoration, Secretary of State Charlie Daniels welcomed the reassembled chandelier home on March 28, 2003 in a ceremony at the State Capitol.

After years of hanging in the Capitol rotunda, the 1913 Mitchell-Vance chandelier has undergone a complete restoration, part of the larger refurbishment of the Rotunda funded by a grant from the Arkansas Natural and Cultural Resources Council. Work on the chandelier included full rewiring, metal repair, careful preservation of polished, etched and antiqued finishes and replacement of the fixture's sixteen "bowls" or globes, followed by a meticulous reassembly of its more than two thousand individual parts. The chandelier remained partially lowered through mid-April, allowing visitors the rare opportunity of seeing the chandelier close-up.



Suspended from the rotunda ceiling by a seventy-three-foot iron chain, the chandelier weighs 4,136 lbs., including the iron chain. The rotunda chandelier was fashioned for the Capitol by the Mitchell-Vance Company of New York; it is an intricate assembly of literally thousands of brass, copper, zinc, iron and glass parts. The St. Louis Antique Lighting Company, principal contractors for the restoration, repaired damaged components, restored surfaces to their original luster and applied protective coatings, while rewiring the chandelier to accommodate up to four thousand four hundred (4400) watts of lighting power

in four separate circuits.

The chandelier is an incredible treasure for the State Capitol—one whose newly rediscovered beauty can be enjoyed for years to come.

Did you know?

The rotunda chandelier has a twin, it hangs in the Utah State Capitol.



5-03

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